

COMMUNIST FRONT PERSONALITIES IN THE
REVOLUTIONARY GOVERNMENT OF IRAQ

Two prominent figures in the new revolutionary government of Iraq have in the past been identified with the Iraq Peace Committee. These two are Col. Jalal Jaffar Awqati (Abbasi), newly designated commander of the Air Force, and Dr. Ibrahim Kubba (Gubba), Minister of Economy in the new cabinet. Awqati in addition was reported as being a World Peace Council member in 1954.

Three other figures in the revolutionary government were participants in the Communist-front Afro-Asian Solidarity Conference held in Cairo, December 1957-January 1958. These are Finance Minister Muhammad Hadid, Guidance Minister Muhammad Sadiq Shanshal, and Education Minister Jabr (Sadir) Umar. The latter, at that time in exile in Syria, headed the delegation to Cairo.

Shanshal has just appointed as his director general of guidance and broadcasting^a fellow Istiglal leader, Gharb al-Haj Ahmad, who has also maintained close contacts with two other Left wing lawyers recently active in the Cairo Afro-Asian Conference: Faiq Samarri, president of the Iraq Lawyers Association (ILA) and former Istiglal vice president, and Husayn Jamil, as of March 1957 secretary general of the Arab Lawyers Federation in Cairo. Between April 1953 and August 1957 Jamil was ILA president and an alleged member of that organization's Communist-controlled sub-group, the Committee to Aid Justice. Moreover,

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for many Jamil has been closely associated with Muhammad Hadid (see above), the two having been secretary general and vice president, respectively, of the Left Wing National Democratic Party (NDP).

It should be noted here that Shanshal held an equivalent position, chief of the propaganda department, under the pro-Axis Rashid Ali government of 1941.* Two of his assistants in this capacity, incidentally, were Fuad Nasser, later to become the secretary general of the Communist Party of Jordan, and Muhammad Nimr Uda (Awdah), as of 1956 a close associate of Jamal Husayni in Saudi Arabia. Uda

A further interesting appointment of the new regime is Hashim Jawad as Iraqi delegate to the UN. Jawad, an associate of Muhammad Hadid in the liberal/Socialist/Communist Ahali (or Baghdad) group in the 1930's, was first named Iraq delegate to the UN in 1946 and has served there intermittently since. He has, however, been a controversial figure, whom the Government has kept abroad. His last problem developed in early 1958 when he was censured by his government for having supported the Greek stand on the Cyprus issue. One Ba'thist, Fuad al-Rikabi (Minister of Development), is identified in the new cabinet. He has served earlier this year as a Ba'th representative in the National Front.

Two of these men, Shanshal and Jabr Umar, have spent most of the past four months abroad. Shanshal, known in Egypt as a friend of Gamal abd-al Nasser, spent most of this time in Cairo. Umar was located in Damascus, where he was reported working closely with

* This government was recognized by only one state - the USSR.

the Syrian intelligence in connection with the clandestine radio, "Voice of Free Iraq." Both were last reported in Damascus.

Hadid and Shanshal have been reported participating as National Congress Party**representatives with the Ba'th Party and the Communist Party of Iraq in the work of the illegal opposition organization, the National Front, since late 1956. However, as late as mid-1955 the Iraq CP had vigorously attacked Hadid and other Left Wing leaders linked with him, including Husayn Jamil and the leader of his Party, Kamil Chaderchi. The change in the CP Iraq's attitude toward those Leftists is credited to instructions received by the Party in April 1956 from Moscow calling for unification of the Iraqi Communist factions and splinter groups as a necessary step toward an effective broad national front. In the rapprochement that followed, Aziz Sharif, an Iraqi Communist, exiled since 1949 and long resident in Syria where he lived with Khalid Bakdash, is credited with the promotion of the CP Iraq's change in attitude toward the inclusion of the Left in the National Front. In spite of his relationship with Bakdash, Sharif himself was, as late as 1955, denounced by the CP Iraq as a "Titoist." Sharif, who has a record as a leading Iraqi Communist dating back to 1934, has for more than ^{twenty} 20 years been linked frequently with the leading Leftists of the Hadid-Chaderchi group, and has consistently supported and advocated

*The National Congress Party is a merger formed by elements of the old Left Wing National Democratic and the Right-extremist Istiqlal parties.

broad united fronts (see Appendix III). Since 1957 he has taken a leading role in the Iraqi participation in Peace Partisan and Afro-Asian solidarity activity outside Iraq. The composition and actions of earlier United Front groupings provide a useful insight into these relationships. (See Appendix III)